

The Perfect  
**SPEECH**

OF

Mr. John Gibbons,

AS IT WAS

Delivered by Himself on the Scaffold

AT

TOWER-HILL,

ON

FRIDAY the 22 of *August*, 1651. being  
the same Day that Mr LOVE (the Minister)  
was also executed.

LIKEWISE,

His Desires to the People ; His Prote-  
station touching Religion ; And his true Prayer imme-  
diately before his head was severed from  
his Shoulders.

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*Published by a perfect Copy, at the request, and for general satis-  
faction to his friends, and others.*

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*Septemb*

*London*, Printed in the Year, 1651.

The Perfect

SPEECH

Mr. John Gibbons



Delivered at the Scaffold

T. O. W. E. R - H. I. L. L.

FRIDAY the 22 of August, 1671. being  
the same Day that Mr. J. O. W. E. R. (the Minister)  
was also executed.

LIXSWASE

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Published by a true Copy of the original, and for General Just-  
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Printed in the Year 1671.



## M. Gibbons Speech upon the Scaffold.

Gentlemen,

**I** Am brought here to the Stage, where *I* am made a spectacle to God, to Angels, and to Men; an object of pity and compassion to my friends, where they see before their eyes a man in the prime of his yeers, and in the flower of his youth cut off as an untimely fruit, and as a Tree that burdeneth the ground, therefore they are sorry; but this is no new thing, it is Gods ordinary way to suffer men to be cast out, that he may receive them to mercy; the poor blind man was thrown out, but he was received to Jesus Christ; the three Children were thrown into the Furnace, but they were received to God; that was the way that he delivered them: Do not stand wondring at Gods proceedings, whatsoever the men be, yet I bless God to eternity; I take it well at his hands, though it seem strange; It is Gods ordinary way, and if it be, Christians should not shun any extremity, if it bring them to Jesus Christ; and therefore I bless God, I come to this Scaffold, to this place, with as much willingness as ever Bridegroom did to receive his Bride: I know the passage of blood is but short, and the way to the Crown, though my head be severed from my body, yet my soul to all eternity shall be joynd to the Lord Jesus Christ; and I in the presence of you all, desire you to witness, that I from my soul desire, that the present Power and Court that is set up, have done themselves no more hurt then they have



done me, for I am assured that all that ever their Sentence hath done, hath put me in the way that I am going; from earth to Heaven, from Friends, and comfort, and creature-relations, that of necessity ere long must be left; and it were a great deal of folly to desire that that we cannot keep; I am going to receive the end of my Faith, the reward of my Hope, the comfort of my Prayers, and of all the prayers and tears of Gods people; where I shall enjoy the Society of all Believers, the sight of God, the fellowship of the Saints, and imbrace God to all eternity; these things none can take from me: Therefore why should I desire to keep these things that the providence of God calls for? and therefore I need not stand grumbling and repining at Gods Will: And I freely submit.

I come not hither to tell a long Story, or to make a discovery of my finnes; the Lord knowes (upon the examinaion of my heart) how many thousands and hundred Millions of finnes I have, and I desire to pour out floods of Teares for them; and I desire that through the Merrit of Christ, the atonement might be made to God for them; from my child-hood I must needs say, I have been such; I have seen a Father buried in the grave, and a Sister, and a Wife, and a Childe laid in the grave, but all that ever I could do to this day, could never put my finnes into the grave, with all my endeavors and all the afflictions and mercies I have had: It is an infinite comfort, though I enjoy nothing else; after this day I shall assuredly never sinne any more, nor grieve the Spirit of God any more, nor dishonour God any more; I profess, though I should not come to Heaven, it is a comfort to me that I shall not sinne and grieve the Spirit of God any more; Blessed be God to all eternity, I shall be out of the power of sin.

That is not all, but further, since I can remember



ter that I set my face towards God; from my childhood I have hedged in my way with thorns, that I might go the strictest and straitest way, my way to bring me to the Lord Jesus Christ; it is a wonderful comfort, and blessed be God for this dayes work; I profess I would not change my condition for ten thousand worlds: I bleis God I find the reward and benefit of the prayers of good people in a wonderful manner; they have more cause to go home and seek dayes of rejoycing and dayes of praise, then to mourn and repine.

In the Bishops time I was one that was a mourner, that lamented the time and the State, and desired to shed tears when the Church was under affliction.

And truly, I further declare, that I have alwayes been and gone upon Gospel Principles; I have alwayes desired to apply particular promises to my particular condition: I know ten thousand generals will do me no good, onely particular Faith and application will do me good, and strengthen and support me this day: I have alwayes ingaged upon pure Principles of Religion to the best of my knowledge, and the utmost of my endeavors; I have alwayes ingaged upon those Principles, from those I never departed; and in those Principles by Gods grace this day I shall die and come to seal with my Blood; I alwayes owned the wayes of God, when they were most persecuted; I think an hundred, nay (I may say) a thousand can tell, that I did never dare to save my Life, or my Skin, or any thing, to quite Religion; though it were never so much clouded, and despised, and disdained; I do now this day rather a thousand times willingly lay my Neck on the Block; believe it, I am a dying man, I chuse it, and had rather have it, then enjoy the most glorious life and liberty with those that are Berrayers of the Truth of God and a good conscience; O Sirs believe it, carry it from a dying man:

In the time of afflictions a good Conscience will stand you in more stead, and more comfort, then a thousand worlds: I bless God more that he now smiles on me, then if all the Emperors and Princes in the world did own me.

I have never been without a trembling heart, since the Spouse of Christ was clothed in mourning; I alwayes thought it my duty, and the least I could do, to lie in tears, when the Church rowled in bloud; and the Lord grant that every Christian soul may make it his work: It is the great breaking of my heart, that I could never get my heart to break enough, to see the Church of Christ in misery: Though God have called, and Christ have called, and there was never such calling; It wounds my soul that I could never mourn more for the Churches afflictions; and the Lord keep all that fear the Lord and his Name, keep those from dayes of rejoycing and thanksgiving for the death of those that God owres, and will wipe all Teares from their Eyes, and those God accounts their bloud precious: Have a care of being of the number of those that rejoyce over the heapes of the carkasses of Gods people.

I am now at the last brought to suffer death as an enemy to the S T A T E, though my conscience tells me I am a friend to the Lord Jesus Christ, His Church, and Members; and though the Jewes heretofore told *Pilate*, if he did let the Lord Christ go, he was no friend to *Cesar*: Must I not say truly, my Conscience bids me say it in the case I am in, whosoever desires to keep the Lord Jesus, to keep Integrity of heart, and innocency of life, and desires to walk in an unspotted life and conversation, whosoever desires to let these old broached Heresies go, and draw their sword for Christ, are not these declared to be Enemies to the S T A T E, and are against them

(5)  
them that desire to keep a good Conscience; and if there be no Law of God to condemne us, (as the Jewes said) There is a Law found out, and by that Law he ought to dy.

I will not make a discourse of the manner of my Tryal; there were ten thousand Men, and Angels, yea God himself can witness the hard measure I had.

I am in Charity with all the World, the Lord of Heaven forgive them; I say nothing my self, only I will tell you what a Gentleman said that was an Eyewitness at my Tryal, that knows all the Actions and Laws as well as any man in the place; He professed that he saw so much, that he would not haue a hand in my Sentence for all the Gold that could lie in Westminster-Hall. I must say for mine own part, and in my Conscience I believe it, if they do not repent, the Lord will call them to an account for this days work, I believe they have gone against God, and his Laws, and the Laws of Nations; I believe so, I speak not this from a bitter spirit; the Lord of Heaven forgive all them that ever had a hand in it, as now I desire mercy when I shall come before the Lord; I looke upon them as a Company of poor Instruments that the Lord knowes how to deal with, and will call to account; it will be time enough when they come to ly upon their dying beds: The Lord grant that my Blood may not stand between them and mercy when they put up their prayers, that nothing concerning me may stand in the way of all the mercy that their souls shall stand in need of. Truly, if you will believe me, I would not leave this Scaffold to enjoy all the pleasures that this World can give, I would not change my condition with them; not with my Witnesses, not with my Judges I would not change my condition; my Conscience tells me, and so I speak, I forgive them, the Lord of Heaven lay not this great sin  
to



to their charge, let all the people of God so pray; they will one day see what it is to lose a good Conscience; and that it is better a great deal to have the light of Gods countenance, then to have a Conscience upon the Rack: They will one day see, that there is nothing to be feared but sin and wrath; and what a comfort and happiness the peace of a good Conscience is, the Lord shew it you.

I am brought here to die for Treason; for complotting against the State: and this is such a Treason as is proclaimed to all the World; such a Plot as was never before; blessed be God I am of another mind; I should appear sadly before God, if my Conscience told me what hath been represented: But I must needs declare my Opinion without offence to any; It is a pretended Plot, to beget a greater Plot: God grant that it be not so; a Plot I fear, to destroy all Church-Government, and the faithfull of the Lord and the godly: For other Plots I understand none; I profess in the presence of God, I know of no Plot, or had a hand in any Plot: I would not for 10000 Worlds be guilty of the blood of any man: I am sensible how many thousands, and ten thousand thousands of sins I have committed, as the number of minutes of one hundred thousand thousands of dayes; that I am sensible of, and desire to bring them before the Lord to stone them to death, and to pour out floods and tears for them before this that I am to die: But I am put now to appeal to the righteous God, whither I am going, to stand before the Bar of an impartial Judge, that knows the intents and thoughts of my heart, and what all my endeavours have been. I never had any other thought then the honour of the Gospel and Religion, and to bring these precious things into the Channels that the Lord would have them in. This was my desire.

Not long since I told a gentleman (now in heaven) that so great is the wound that it breaks my heart, to see the wonderfull scorn and contempt that lies on the face of Religion in the eyes of Papists, Turks and Heathens, and all reformed Nations, that I professe I have sometimes wish'd to have swim'd out of my chamber in tears, and said to the gentleman: that it was a mercy if ever the Lord would find a means to wash away the stain of scorn and contempt of the Gospell, though it were with the blood of his Ministers and faithfull servants: Who knows what this days work may do? who knows what God hath for this land? Let none despise the day of small things; if it be clay and spittle, if God take it in his hand, it shall cure the blind: What do we know what the blood of two men may do to fill up the measure of blood? what the blood of two men may do towards all the prayers and indeavours of Gods people? therefore be not troubled. But I pray give me leave: whatsoever is written concerning me, or the blessed servant of God who is gone before me, and now singing Hallelujahs to all eternity, this days work will be written in heaven, it will be written by the Lord Jesus: Suffering for God and Religion, confident I am you will find it so. I can look in the face of God (excepting my weaknesse and failings) that in all this businesse I had no ill intention: you are to believe a dying man: I am sensible what it is to die to God, to the ocean of eternity; to go to stand at his bar: Believe me, believe me; I professe before God, Angels and men, I know not what I die for this day: what ever reports do say, believe the words of a dying man: I am confident the *odour* of this dayes work (were an Angell of heaven to write a book) will never be washt off: that this days work will lie upon some: the Lord grant they may see their sin, and repent in time.

But let me say a little further: I confesse I cannot but wonder, how the men now in Power can look any Christian in the face, my conscience tells me, that it is the originall of all plots, that hath torn the Nation asunder, and the Kingdome, and the Liberty, and the profits asunder: whatsoever belongs to Christians and rational men, is all torn from us; have they not thrown the three Kingdoms into that misery, that I am confident, all the enemies of the Church could not have done the like; but rather how shall they be able to look the great God in the face, when he shall make inquisition for

blood? to whose doot shall all the blood of England, and Scotland, and Ireland return? who knows not, that within these three yeares there was the most glorious promising morning that ever looked England in the face? how comes it to passe that we have such dayes of trouble and misery? God knowes who hath had a hand and been instruments in it. He knowes that these are the Plotters with a witness: These are the Egyptians that all the people of God groan under: and all —

*Then the people interrupted him, and some said, He is going to die with a lie in his mouth, Mr. Sheriffe. When they were quiet he went on thus.*

I must needs say, that the blood that was shed in *Queen Mary's* daies was a delightfull sight and persecution, and it was a pleasant sight to Antichrist in the Bishop's time, and there have been many delightfull sights of late that I will not speak of, because it gives offence; but the most joyfull sight that ever Antichrist saw, he beholds this day in the blood of the faithfull Ministers and servants of God; and now I come upon the Scaffold to fight this bloody Field, the Lord grant I may be enabled to overcome it.

I confesse, I believe it is a sad sight to the people of God, to see all their prayers, fastings, and tears come to this, to see the piercing sword thrust into their bowells; but I desire them to take heed of repining and murmuring, look who stands on the top of the ladder, and not on the next step, see God ordering and contriving all; look not at the hammer, but God; God is the best contriver, he knows what is best for you, and us, and blessed be his Name: I am come hither to witness of his glory, there is none knows what glory a suffering condition brings to God, and to his Saints, how many flowers it adds to their Garland; we should see as many run to it, as now shun it, when Christ shall come, and all shall call to the Mountains and Rocks to fall on them and cover them! what a blessed sight will it be for Christ to put forth his hand to them, if they saw but the infinite reward Christ hath for them in heaven, it would be sufficient to invite them to come in and suffer for the Lord; nay we may be ashamed we have done no more, nor looked after the gaining of that precious eternall Mansion, where we shall see God, and be in the arms of Jesus Christ, where we shall suffer no more, but enjoy an infinite weight of beatitude and glory.

Let.



Let the word of a dying man prevail; for the Lords sake hold to the truth, part not from the truth; it were better that heaven should fall, and the world be on fire, then that God should be dishonoured; the least error is as a barrell of gunpowder that will blow up the Church and Kingdome; Error draws a sword against Christ and his truth; take heed of Error, lest you fall into a gulfe that you can never come out of. Ask your own experience, how many Ministers and Professors have fallen into error, and have gone away with guilt upon their conscience, and a blot upon their names: Error is like a chain, if the soul would go to Christ, it cannot; error is as a partition, under what glasse soever it come: though in the habit of a Saint or Angell, it is dangerous poyson; be like *Ashanasius*, own the truth, though all the world were against it; or as *Martin Luther*, who set himself against all the power and force of *Antichrist*; own the truth, though eminent Ministers and Professors that seem eminent in faith and grace fall from it, as many do.

I shall now suddainly conclude; I am very unwilling in my condition to speak any thing that may be offensive to any, I have onely this to say, and I have done; whatsoever chargeth me nearest, I am confident the Lord will one day clear my innocence; he hath written down the actions and proceedings, and he will one day shew it, and vindicate my name in the sight of all; there will be a Resurrection, and all men shall be called to an account for all the reproaches that have been cast upon the faithfull of the Lord.

All the Churches of Christ are now in the furnace; the Church of *Scotland*, *England*, and *Ireland*; the Lord grant that all may mourn, and never dare to keepe a joyfull day, till the Church of Christ be delivered; for God calls, and Christ calls, and the Church calls; and I had rather be (and let all that fear God chuse rather to lie) in the Den of Dragons, then to be of the number of those that rejoyce when the Churches of God are in sorrow; the Sun shined upon *Sadome* a little while, but presently a showre of fire and brimstone came and destroyed them all, so the prosperity and flourishing state of the wicked is like that; the children of God may sit in darknesse for a while, but they shall have light to eternity: wicked men may rejoyce for a moment, but there is an eternall night that will follow, that shall never be blown over: A child of God had

rather that all the Lions in the wilderness should roar, then to have God angry; what were it for a man, though like *Alexander*, he had prosperity, and had as much peace and glory as *Pompey*, and did ride in as much state as *Cesar*, when he is under the frownes of God that hates wicked men, as much as he is hated of wicked men: the Bush may burn but it shall never be consumed, the Church hath been 5600. years under burning, and persecution, and flame, but the Church shall remain to the end of the world.

Thus I have endeavoured to declare my self and my Conscience, though with much brokennesse and distemper: and now I am to take my leave of the world, I have only this word to say, that you bear me witnesse, that whatsoever may be charged on me, or may be said after my death, I am confident God will own me for an innocent person; I never to the best of my remembrance had a hand or a heart, I had rather die a thousand deaths then ever to have a hand in the blood of any of Gods people; and now God hath brought me hither, and not men, it is his hand; I again desire to forgive all the world, every mans person, the Lord grant that they may have mercy, and I desire, as now I desire mercy, the Lord to forgive all their sins. I know all things are under Gods dealing and Commission, and this condition had never come to me if God had not seen it good, and though the Axe be so near, if I had more to do for God, and for his Church and people, he would do with the Axe, as he did with that of *Abraham*, God would take hold of it, and could, and blessed be his Name that he takes the ordering of it to himself, therefore I have a quiet spirit, I have no discontent in the world: and now not to speak of death, alas that is nothing; but of Eternity that my soul is now lancing into: I am now to enter into eternity, where to stand with a naked soul before God, whose eyes are ten thousand times brighter then the sun, that cannot indure to behold iniquity: I am now going to God that will be as a consuming fire, and as armed thunder against me, if I did not see his infinite mercy, and my blessed Saviour standing between me and the Lord, presenting all that I do: if I had all the righteousnesses of all the Angells in heaven this day to go to God the Father, wo, and ten thousand woes to me, if I had not interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, if I had the sin of all the persons that are here, and that have been ever since the Creation, if I come and stand  
cloathed

cloathed this day with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus, I am confident I should have pardon for them all, as for one; there lies my strength, and my hope, and my happiness, all my righteousness, and all my prayers, and all my performances, are but as filthy rags; and should God draw out the best Sabbath that ever I kept, and the best prayer that ever I made, and the best syllable of that prayer, it would be a sin; I have scarlet sins, sins of all sorts and ranks, I desire you that you would all mourn and help me this day, blessed be the Lord of heaven for the benefit and support of the prayers of Gods people; I am perswaded that there was never any man in my condition, that went to heaven upon the wings of so many prayers: be ye all content, and go home and rejoyce before the Lord, be certain that you keep a day of Thanksgiving for this daies work, and our souls shall bless God to eternity for this daies work; there is not one drop of blood could be spared, if it could, it should have been kept; God knows how to answer your prayers and tears, though we must not be heard, he hath summoned us to come to the arm of his mercy, why do I stay from God longer? I bless God I am coming.

Now I shall only desire as *Sampson* when he made his last request, only this once help me, my call to you all is, that you would pray and mourne for me, this once help me, after a little while your prayers will do me no good, nor your tears will do me no good; therefore now for the Lords sake help me off the Scaffold, lift up a prayer to God for me, let there be some compassion, you know not what fightings may be in me; but I bless God, I hope to walk triumphantly to God presently, but do you act your parts, your strength, and your interest, whatever your prayers and tears can do, help me I beseech you now, for I shall never more need your help.

And now is Christ taking notice what was cast into the Churches treasure, he looked upon the widows two mites, Christ is looking this day who helps me a poor creature, and supports me, and saith Christ, is there none will help him? O pray help me to commend all my conditions to God, that he would rebuke Satan, and make me die sincerely as a Christian, that I may willingly lie down on the Block, as I would to lie down on a Feather-bed after I am weary,



weary, that I may be willing to come to him; pray for me, that all the graces that my soul wants they may be strengthened.

Most glorious God, I now into thy hands commend my spirit, and all that is in me; O blessed God, I never was in want but thou diddest relieve me, I was never in distresse but thou helpedst me, never, never, and I am confident thou wilt not leave me, till thou see my soul in heaven. O blessed Saviour! thou wentest up and down on the earth, thou knowest what it is to suffer, what it is to be betrayed, what it is to be scorned and tempted; blessed Saviour thou sawest me when I was running from thee, wilt thou leave me now I come to thee: Lord Jesus I commend all into thy hands, hoping that after this day I shall never suffer more, nor never pray more.

*His last Prayer in the hearing of the people.*

**O** Most blessed and glorious Lord God, a God of piercing eyes, and seest me thy poor creature, thou knowest the intention of my heart; men hear the words of my mouth, but thou knowest the intentions of my soul. O Lord put words into my mouth vvhhat I should speak for my self, novv is the last time that ever I shall speak, till I come to speak and admire thee to eternity. O blessed God! O vvhhat is a smile of thy face novv! O one smile is more vvvorth then ten thousand vvvorlds. O blessed God! before my head is severed from my body, let me be assured that my soul shall be received into thy hands. O blessed God! let me find novv the benefit of all the prayers and tears, and desire of my heart. Lord it is true, I have nothing to plead, I have not a handfull of Goats haire, I have nothing but a dead dull heart; but Lord, though I be broken and distracted, thou lookedst upon *Hozekiah* vvith his chattering prayers, vvhen he chattered as a Crain; blessed Lord, look upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and vvhatsoever imperfections thou hast seen in me pardon them, and vvash me from them in his blood; Lord, though I had never sinned before I came to this Scaffold, yet I have committed sin enough here to throwv me into everlasting burning: but Lord, look for thy promise sake, for thy mercy sake, look over thy bowvells of compassion, consult vvith them novv, and vvith thine Attributes, and vvhatsoever Christ and Mercy may speak, hear the cries this day.

Blessed

Blessed God, there is no reason that thou shouldest own me, but there is reason thou shouldest own thy promise, and own thy truth, and own thy Christ: O blessed God, grant that this day all thy people may bless thee, and may go and keep a day of Thanksgiving, that I have not carried my self any way unbecoming a Christian; Lord let me give thee the glory, I am but poor dust and ashes, and clay, the unworthiest in the world, all my strength is nothing; I bless God I am now coming where I shall need Faith no more, nor need Hope no more: O Lord! therefore let me act all the strength I have in thy Promise, and in the Lord Jesus Christ some particular promise. O Lord shew thy self, O one smile for the Lord Jesus Christs sake. I commend all unto thee, I lay my neck upon the Block, I give my soul into thy hands, take my soul, it is no matter what becomes of my body, I shall never more, never more hope for any thing, or desire any thing, but all my soul shall be filled up; Lord hear me, and help me, and stand by me, and strengthen me, and guide me, and pardon and forgive all my sins for the Lord Jesus Christ sake.

His prayer being ended, he put off his dubblet, and ask't for his Noble friend Dr. *Bastwick*, and imbraced him: after that he imbraced his Unkle, and others of his friends on the Scaffold; then laying his head on the Block, Dr. *Bastwick* came to him, and wish'd him to take off his Rings, which accordingly he did, by raising himself upon his knees, and gave them to his Unkle; which done, he laid his head on the Block, and holding up his left hand, the Executioner at one blow and a small rase severed his head from his body.

FINIS.